Soviet Education for Science and Technology by ALEXANDER G. KOROL; 513 pages; $8.50; Technology Press of Massachusetts Institute of Technology and John Wiley & Sons, 1957.

Making extensive use of Soviet sources as well as the testimony of Russian refugees and American visitors to Russia, Alexander Korol presents a picture of the Soviet educational system with special emphasis on provisions for training engineers and physical scientists. The treatise, which is a product of the Center of International Studies of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, is heavily laden with statistical material, sample curricula, and excerpts from Soviet publications. Cautious in its conclusions, it may well serve as a corrective both to the bland assumption of our technical superiority so prevalent in America in pre-Sputnik days and to the exaltation of the Soviet educational process found in many more recent publications.

The book devotes four chapters to a general survey of the Soviet educational system, a study of the ten-year school, which is expected to provide the bulk of the required education for all Russian children by 1960, and the Technicum, or secondary engineering technical school charged with the training of technicians. Apart from a final chapter of general comments and reflections, the remainder of the book covers various aspects of higher education in science and engineering in seven chapters. In the Soviet system, Korol tells us, the entire educational process is directed toward providing different parts of the Soviet economy with the needed manpower as foreseen in the successive five-year plans. In the engineering field, in particular, this has led to excessive specialization which, along with an overload of prescribed course work, has tended to rob the student of initiative. This fault is much less evident in the fields of mathematics and physics, where the achievement is impressive. The success of the educational effort in this area may largely be ascribed to the fact that it has been least affected by dogmatism.

In his Comments and Reflections Korol stresses the fact that Soviet techniques of education cannot serve as a model for education in a democracy, whose objectives are entirely different. He also points to the remarkable failure of political indoctrination to mold the attitudes desired by the Soviet state, even after 40 years of complete control of the educational apparatus. An important consideration, which possibly does not receive sufficient emphasis, is that the Soviet educational system is currently in a state of flux. This circumstance makes any prediction precarious. There are, however, many interesting conclusions to be gleaned from a perusal of this book, which constitutes a valuable reference work on the evolution and practices of Soviet technical education.—*V. K. Zworykin*